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CONFERENCES - PAMPHLET BOX - 1927

COLONY AND PROTECTORATE OF KENYA.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF COFFEE CONFERENCE

HELD IN NAIROBI, JUNE, 1927.

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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF COFFEE CONFERENCE 1927

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COFFEE CONFERENCE, 1927. [*By favour of the "East African Standard"*]

Seated. (*Left to Right*): COMDR. A. COKE, D.S.O.; HON. CONWAY HARVEY, M.L.C.; C. KENNETH ARCHER (President, C.P.U.) HON. E. HARRISON (Ag. Director of Agriculture); H. E. THE AG. GOVERNOR, SIR E. B. DENHAM, K.B.E., C.M.G.; CAPT. M. S. H. MONTAGU; CAPT. W. TYSON, M.B.E.; LT. COL. W. K. TUCKER, C.B.E.; H. GRAHAME BELL; LT. COMDR. F. LE G. WORSLEY.

Standing (*Left to Right*): G. J. GLASSFORD; A. BARKER; COMDR. R. M. JAKENHAM WALSH; COMDR. E. C. WARD; MAJOR A. J. H. SMITH; MAJOR C. GAITSKELL (Secretary, C.P.U.); H. F. BARGMAN; H. W. BARRY; CAPT. J. C. CORNFORTH, M.C.; CAPT. W. KIRTON; P. T. MONCKTON; CAPT. C. SETON MILLER; CAPT. H. C. FINDLAY; HON. A. C. TANNAHILL, M.L.C.; H. C. KIRSOPP; MAJOR J. W. MILLIGAN; LT. COL. L. E. DENING, A.D.C., E. REILLY COWAN; L. A. JOHNSON; J. F. H. HARPER, J.P.; D. A. JOHNSTON; H. H. PEET;

COFFEE CONFERENCE.

Held at the Offices of the Department of Agriculture, Nairobi, on 23rd June, 1927.

In accordance with a request conveyed by the meeting of the Coffee Planters' Union of Kenya and East Africa, held at Nakuru, on the 19th March, 1927, the Department of Agriculture took steps to convene the Conference along the lines that had been suggested.

Invitations were sent to Associations, to appoint delegates, and to submit resolutions for an Agenda.

The President of the Coffee Planters' Union was also invited to attend, the Elected Members' Organisation to send a delegation, and the Nairobi Chamber of Commerce to send two delegates.

In addition invitations were extended to certain other persons interested in the industry, whose knowledge and experience were considered likely to be of value to the Conference.

Certain Departmental Officers were nominated to attend in an advisory capacity.

REPRESENTATION.

Associations Invited.	*Delegates in Attendance.*
Ruiru Farmers' Association ..	J. F. H. Harper, Esq., J.P. Capt. Walter Kirton. G. J. Glassford, Esq.
Limuru Farmers' Association ..	P. T. Monckton, Esq.
Kabete Farmers' Association ..	E. Reilly Cowan, Esq.
Thika District Association	Lt.-Comdr. F. le G. Worsley Major J. C. H. Grant.
Makuyu District Association ..	Capt. J. C. Cornforth, M.C.
Kikuyu District Settlers' Association	Not attending.
Donyo Sabuk Association	H. W. Barry, Esq.
Mount Kenya Association	M. D. le Poer Trench, Esq. Capt. A. H. W. Sheldrick.
Trans Nzoia Farmers' Association ..	A. Barker, Esq. J. V. Winter, Esq. H. C. Kirsopp, Esq.
Kipkarren Farmers' Association ..	Not attending.
Soy Farmers' Association	A. B. Duirs, Esq.

REPRESENTATION—*contd.*

Associations Invited.	*Delegates in Attendance.*
Kaimosi Farmers' Association ..	Capt. C. Seton Miller
Songhor Association	Capt. F. V. Ward.
Koru Farmers' Association ..	Major A. J. H. Smith
Fort Ternan Farmers' Association..	J. J. Vernon Wilson, Esq.
Lumbwa Farmers' Association ..	Major W. S. Belfield
Kericho Farmers' Association ..	Comdr. A. Coke, D.S.O.
Sotik Farmers' Association ..	Comdr. R. M. Pakenham-Walsh
Solai Association	H. H. Peet, Esq.
Subukia Farmers' Association ..	Comdr. E. C. Ward.
Dagoretti Association	Capt. F. H. Sprott.
Kyambu Association	H. Grahame Bell, Esq.
	Capt. H. C. Findlay.
	Capt. M. S. H. Montagu.
Coffee Planters' Union (President)	C. Kenneth Archer, Esq.
Elected Members' Organisation	Col. Hon. C. G. Durham, M.L.C.
	Hon. Conway Harvey, M.L.C.
Nairobi Chamber of Commerce ..	Hon. A. C. Tannahill, M.L.C.
	Capt. W. Tyson, M.B.E.

Additional Members Invited.

Major J. W. Milligan.
S. O. Hemsted, Esq.
H. F. Bargman, Esq.
Lt.-Col. W. K. Tucker, C.B.E.
Major C. Gaitskell (Secretary, Coffee Planters' Union).
L. A. Johnson, Esq.
H. Douglas, Esq.
D. A. Johnston, Esq.

In Attendance.

T. J. Anderson, Esq., Entomologist.
T. W. Kirkpatrick, Esq., Asst. Entomologist.
H. Wilkinson, Esq., Inspector of Plantations.
V. A. Beckley, Esq., Agricultural Chemist.
F. Browning, Esq., Superintendent of the Line, K. & U. Railways.
Capt. M. St. C. Thom, Police Department.
H. E. Welby, Esq., Administration.
F. Parker, Esq. (Secretary).

Hon. E. Harrison, Actg. Director of Agriculture (Chairman).

Proceedings of Coffee Conference.

HON. E. HARRISON (Acting Director of Agriculture) was unanimously appointed Chairman of the Conference.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE ACTING GOVERNOR (Sir E. B. Denham, K.B.E., C.M.G.), in declaring the Conference open said :—

Mr. Harrison and Gentlemen, I am very glad to be here to-day to meet delegates from all parts of the country. I have just got back from an extended tour of the Northern Frontier Province where I visited Barsaloi, Wajir and Marsabit.

I do not know that I saw any land particularly suitable for coffee, but I saw large areas of land in which undoubtedly there are agricultural possibilities. To-day you are dealing with, and are asking me to open a Conference concerned with, the settled areas, and with one of the main crops and perhaps the richest crop in the Colony. I am glad that this Conference is being well attended, and that representatives are here from so many different parts of the Colony. It is, I am sure, a matter of regret to you all that Mr. Holm, the Director of Agriculture, and the Coffee Officer, are not able to be present owing to the fact that they have gone on leave; but Mr. Harrison has devoted considerable time and care not only to the preliminary preparations for this Conference, but also to the study of the subject under discussion.

Government welcomes Conferences such as these. The last one I had the honour of opening was the Livestock Conference. The resolutions reached by that Conference will, Government is convinced, be of the greatest advantage and benefit to this Colony. Several Conferences have been held in the past which have also had sound and valuable results, and I feel sure that the Conference which is opening to-day should be second to none in the results it will achieve in the interests of the Colony and of the industry particularly concerned.

I see in the resolutions, a copy of which was sent to me last night, that there are many admirable suggestions put forward for improvements in the cultural and experimental work in the coffee industry, and in one respect at least there appears to be complete agreement amongst the Associations who have put forward these suggestions. And that uniformity is with regard to the work and expenditure being undertaken by Government.

I addressed the Coffee Planters' Union two years ago and I informed them on that occasion that Government considered that the Coffee industry should itself contribute towards the heavy expenditure involved in scientific staff in connection with the cultivation. I adhere to-day to the opinion I expressed

then. I trust that I yield to none in appreciation of the importance of the cultivation with which you are concerned, and I realise fully that the industry is perhaps the most important one in Kenya. Over 700 estates are producing coffee, over 1,000 European males are directly dependent on it, and it gives direct employment to at least 35,000 natives throughout the year. The acreage under coffee at present is about 70,000 acres; the tonnage of coffee produced is annually increasing, and I believe now has reached 8,000 tons, and the area is gradually extending so that to-day over 30 per cent of the Colony's exports are scheduled under coffee valued roughly at one million pounds.

Kenya is the most important East African producer of coffee; East Africa is the second largest supplier of coffee to the British markets, being beaten by Costa Rica only; and East Africa supplies twice as much coffee to Britain as does British India. East Africa should soon become the largest supplier to the British market, and we should aim at capturing the market so freely opened to us.

These figures speak for themselves, and Government is not blind to them. Government does fully recognise the importance of the industry, but it must be recognised that Government unfortunately has not got Fortunatus's purse. The claims made on the Government from all parts of the country and on behalf of other industries are very great, and are far beyond the present financial resources of the Government. This Colony cannot bear all the expenditure that is necessary at the present time—"necessary" I use relatively—necessary for the present and the future. You cannot have it all ways. You cannot expect large expenditure on roads—in my opinion absolutely essential at the present time—or further development of undeveloped areas or improved postal services and at the same time expect Government to meet a very heavy bill for scientific assistance in agriculture. There are other cultivations, other branches of agriculture which yearly demand increased expenditure. The overhead charges on special staff for coffee work amount to about £3,500 per annum, making deductions for a portion of certain officers' time being devoted to other industries.

Government has only recently given further proof of its realisation of the importance of the coffee industry to this country in approving an expenditure of some £2,400 on two additional entomologists, and two field stations to deal principally with the mealie bug in coffee. I hope that you will realise that at any rate Government is sympathetic and is trying to forward the interests of the coffee industry. But in view of all the interests in the country there must be a limit to expenditure on a particular industry, however important that

may be. There should be some measure of self-help, and I believe that the coffee industry to-day is in a position to give such assistance. Every big industry to-day in all parts of the world realises the importance of creating its own scientific staff. In other countries mills, factories and agricultural companies employ their own chemists and scientific advisers, and I think some measure of assistance towards the objects, the importance of which is rightly stressed by you, may well be made by yourselves.

Please do not regard Government as unsympathetic in this matter. I spent the first twenty years of my service in a Colony—Ceylon—where the tragedy of disease and pests in coffee was one of the most important chapters in the history of that Colony. The prosperity of one of our richest colonies was for a time shaken by such enemies to cultivation as you have to meet on your farms to-day. I assure you that Government is ready and anxious to co-operate with you in this grave matter, but I trust that it will be in co-operation and with due recognition of the fact that Government cannot, in justice to the whole community, contribute beyond a certain point—I am not saying that that point has been reached—but there must be a point, and after that is reached I trust that the progress and prosperity of your industry are to-day such as to justify your bearing some portion of this expenditure, on measures which in your interests and in the interests of the Colony are so essential.

I hope and believe that this year has been a good year for the industry, and I trust that this Conference will succeed in making suggestions and putting forward proposals which will further insure you against the pests and diseases which do threaten this cultivation. I assure you of Government support in this matter, but feel that this support can most readily be given, and in fullest measure, and with justice to all communities, if you yourselves recognise that you can contribute to some extent to the expenditure which must necessarily be considerable in furthering your great industry.

Mr. C. Kenneth Archer expressed the thanks of the delegates to His Excellency for declaring the Conference open, and for the address Sir Edward had delivered. They could assure His Excellency that the question to which he had devoted the bulk of his observations would receive serious consideration by the Conference, and that the delegates would bear in mind what had been said with regard to the Government's attitude in the matter.

The vote of thanks to His Excellency was carried with acclamation.

AGENDA.

1. Cultural and Experimental work.
2. Maintenance of Soil Fertility.
3. Investigational work on Pests and Diseases and their treatment.
4. Plantation Inspection, regularity and frequency.
5. Organisation of Extension Services, *i.e.*, attendance of Departmental Officers for Advisory Services in districts.
6. Financial provision.
7. Coffee sales and Coffee thefts.
8. Estate Management, etc.
9. Appointment of Consulting Committee for future Conference.

1—Cultural and Experimental Work,

Resolution No. (i).

"*That this Conference is of opinion that Government should purchase a small coffee estate in a suitable locality whereon uninterrupted experiments may be carried out by a resident scientific officer.*"—(Dagoretti Association)—Withdrawn.

Resolution No. (ii).

"*Continuity of Experiments—That the time has come for Government to undertake experimental work on a larger scale than heretofore, and in connection with same a sufficiency of staff is necessary to ensure that results of experiments are not lost through absences on leave.*"—(Mount Kenya Association)—Withdrawn.

Resolution No. (iii).

"*This Conference advocates the establishment by Government of experimental coffee plots in the various areas in the Colony under the control of the Coffee Officer, or a technical officer of the Department of Agriculture, with the object of determining, inter alia:—*

(*a*) *the effect of various types of fertilisers ;*

(*b*) *the best method and most effective rotation of application ;*

(*c*) *the incidence and control of pests and diseases ;*

(*d*) *the marking of mother trees for seed selection.*"

(Ruiru Farmers' Association)—See amended resolution on page 10.

CAPT. SPROTT in moving Resolution (i), said that the action suggested in the motion appeared to him an obvious thing for Government to do and it did not require much explanation. The only objection would be the initial expenditure and financial provision, but he saw no reason why such an estate, if established, should not pay its way. Experiments could be carried out annually on the treatment of pests and diseases.

MR. HARPER who seconded, asked that the views of the Department might be expressed by one of its officers.

MR. KIRKPATRICK (Asst. Entomologist) said he would rather not make any suggestion as to whether the farm should be leased or rented. In his view one officer should be permanently stationed on such an experimental farm, to be located in the most diseased area. This would avoid loss of time in travelling. He thought the Travelling Laboratories now being prepared would solve some of the problems.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Harrison) also referred to the great amount of time lost in travelling by Departmental Officers. He referred to the danger that was run in transporting material to the Scott Agricultural Laboratories, in that undesirable pests might be introduced into that area. He thought that the Department was in some agreement with the proposal for establishing experimental coffee farms, but it should not be forgotten that on account of experimental work, the costs were somewhat high, and there were other difficulties. In his opinion, a portion of privately owned property should be leased, and officers could be moved from one area to another as investigational work required. It would not be possible to establish farms in each of the many coffee areas to meet their individual needs. He asked delegates to give their opinion in regard to the small coffee estate they had advocated, and what should be its functions.

MR. ARCHER suggested that the resolution of the Ruiru Farmers' Association (No. iii) on the Agenda, went more fully into the matter, and also explained the points at issue.

He moved as an amendment to No. (i) that Resolution No. (iii) be taken.

He considered item (d), under Resolution No. (iii), an important one, and a matter in which practically no investigation had been made. He said the question was to find a way of financing an important service in connection with one of the most important industries in the country. Though he was opposed to Government trading or farming in competition with private interests, it was not clear to him why Government should not pay for an experimental service by combining it

with limited farming—in an endeavour to keep down expenditure—and he thought technical officers would soon acquire practical experience. His suggestion was that an area of 80 acres could be leased ; 40 acres to be used for experimental purposes, and the balance planted with coffee. The income derived from the sales of coffee would be used to defray the cost of upkeep of the whole estate, including the experiments. There should be one experimental plot up-country, and another in one of the coffee growing areas close to Nairobi, as the conditions in the two areas were entirely dissimilar. One of the difficulties in connection with the utility of Technical Officers in the country was their immobility, and he hoped under the coming Estimates the Travelling Allowances would be more generously dealt with. It should be observed, however, that travelling expenses would be reduced if it was decided to have the experimental plots.

CAPT. KIRTON seconded the amendment. He supported all Mr. Archer had said, and he knew that the Entomologists and other officers were working at a disadvantage, and wished to emphasise what had been said with regard to Travelling Allowances

COMMANDER COKE said it was entirely impossible to purchase a coffee estate suitable for the whole country. The Senior Coffee Officer had stated that the art of growing coffee in Nyanza was entirely different from that in Kyambu. Three experimental farms situated in different parts of the country would be necessary.

MR. JOHNSON referred to Black Berry Disease being the cause of trouble in the Uasin Gishu, and explained that investigations must be started in districts where diseases now exist.

CAPT. SPROTT, with the consent of the seconder, withdrew resolution No. (i) in favour of No. (iii).

MR. JOHNSON considered the work to be undertaken should be scientific plant breeding and selection, and this kind of work could not be performed by the officers available.

THE CHAIRMAN explained that a lot could be done by selection. The Senior Coffee Officer had experience, and a good deal of selection was now done. The work should be undertaken now, and they ought to begin to mark mother trees in the country.

MR. JOHNSON emphasised that the work required scientific training.

MR. HARPER said that they had a precedent in the wheat industry. There were experimental plots dispersed about the country which were under the supervision of a travelling

officer, who was not actually resident. Plots could be selected in suitable areas which would not necessarily entail the residence of an officer. He asked how that method of control could be applied to the coffee industry.

THE CHAIRMAN replied that wheat and coffee were hardly comparable. With wheat the management of the work was much easier. He considered the suggestion was sound provided it was recognised that there was a limit to plot work in an area. An attempt had been made to have small plots of the kind suggested, but on account of leave and the lack of interest of the coffee planters where the experiments were carried out, the work had not been completed. In this country the work was made especially difficult on account of the travelling involved.

CAPT. MONTAGU asked how many plots should there be in the country, and what should be the size ?

THE CHAIRMAN said it would depend on the possibility of coffee development in an area. In regard to the small acre experimental plots, a man could manage 6 or 8 of them.

MR. MAXWELL TRENCH thought Conference had brought up a wise discussion, but it would be impossible to centralise in the matter. With the various conditions existing in this Colony he considered Entomology, Manurial Experiments and Mycology could not be dealt with by one man. They must be investigated separately.

MR. ARCHER explained that the resolution did not restrict the control of the plot to one man.

THE CHAIRMAN replying to further remarks, said four farms would be required to meet the needs of the Colony, but Government could not afford to pay for four officers and four stations. He informed Conference that the Department hoped to have three Travelling Laboratories—one at Eldoret, one at Nakuru, and one in the Nairobi locality—in order that officers would be able to work in different districts.

CAPT. MONTAGU said that the best course was to consider the principal of the thing and leave the details for a future meeting.

MR. TRENCH thought Resolution No. (ii) was incorporated in No. (iii), and that the former might be withdrawn. In the past experiments had been started and then left off through shortage of staff. The resolution under discussion asked for a bigger staff.

The Resolution, amended as follows, was then put to the Conference, and carried unanimously.

" That this Conference advocates the establishment by Government of experimental coffee plots in the various areas in the Colony under the control wherever possible of resident scientific officers, or technical officers, of the Department of Agriculture, with the object of determining, inter alia :—

(a) the effect of the various types of fertilizers ;

(b) the best method and most effective rotation of application.

(c) the incidence and control of pests and diseases ;

(d) the marking of mother trees for seed selection."

Resolution No. (iv).

" That this Conference tenders its thanks to the Hon. H. E. Schwartze and the Hon. Conway Harvey for moving and seconding the motion in the Legislative Council which resulted in the appointment of a Select Committee to enquire into the necessity for increased technical services to assist the Coffee and Maize industries. Further this Conference trusts that Government will give effect to the Report of the said Select Committee, (but believes that it would be an advantage for Government to establish at least one of its technical officers on a farm under ordinary work-a-day conditions, rather than invest in a third travelling laboratory, as advocated in the Report)."—(Ruiru Farmers' Association) See amendment below

MR. HARPER, in moving the resolution, said a great deal of thanks was due to those gentlemen who took up the matter in Legislative Council, and this Conference was a happy opportunity of expressing their thanks. He thought the latter part of the resolution (placed in brackets) was now unnecessary, and asked for the resolution to end at the word " Committee."

MR. GRAHAM BELL seconded the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN said the Department also was very grateful for the assistance rendered by the two unofficial Members of Legislative Council, and they welcomed the additional appointments.

HON. CONWAY HARVEY, on behalf of himself and Hon. H. E. Schwartze, said they had much pleasure in accepting the thanks. They would be able to do a great deal more than they were able to do now if coffee planters would make known their requirements. They had now a most excellent Assistant Entomologist and a most excellent Inspector of Plantations, and now they were getting these Travelling Laboratories, as well as extra Entomologists. In the past they had been handicapped because coffee planters and others had not put

up a definite case as to what they really wanted. It was very hard to argue a case in which they had to generalise, indeed it was almost impossible unless the case was definite.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

2 —Maintenance of Soil Fertility.

THE CHAIRMAN asked that this Resolution be dealt with in the afternoon when the representative from the Railway Department would attend.

Conference agreed. (See page 20.)

3 —Investigational Work on Pests and Diseases and their Treatment.

Resolution No. (i).

"*Each year since* 1922 *has produced a fresh pest in Coffee in Kenya, and additional scientific research is a necessity to the prosperity of the industry.*"—(Mount Kenya Association)—Carried.

MR. TRENCH, in moving the Resolution, said reference had been made by the Chairman that extra scientific men would shortly be appointed, and it did not call for much discussion.

CAPT. SHELDRICK seconded.

THE CHAIRMAN informed Conference of the Agricultural Research Conference, arranged by the Secretary of State, to be held in London this year. The Amani Institute might in the near future be of assistance to coffee planters in Kenya.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution No. (ii).

"*That from the financial provision mentioned in Section* 6 *of the Agenda, a large proportion of the money availalbe be devoted to Section* 3 *of the Agenda.*"—(Sotik Farmers' Association)—*See* amendment, page 12.

COMMANDER PAKENHAM-WALSH proposed the Resolution, and said that his Association after discussion came to the conclusion in view of the serious losses that had happened in the coffee crop during the past year, that the larger proportion of the money available should be expended in getting rid of existing pests before further investigational work or experiments were undertaken. The Association thought that, even before experimental coffee farms or plots were established, special officers should concentrate on present menaces, and endeavour to save losses.

COMMANDER COKE seconded.

CAPT. SPROTT observed that it would be unwise to stop all experiments now being conducted, and in any case many of them must be in connection with the pests and diseases now proving a menace to the industry, and whose eradication was advocated by the Sotik Farmers' Association.

MR. HARPER pointed out that the bulk of the expenditure was devoted to investigational work on pests and diseases, and their treatment, and that would appear to be the object of the motion.

THE CHAIRMAN read the motion amended. He explained that the money recently voted to the service of the coffee industry in particular was devoted to additional investigational officers and Travelling Laboratories, and if experimental farms or plots were to be provided then additional money would be required for that purpose.

The amended resolution was carried *nem con*, as follows :–

"*That from the financial provision for coffee service, a large proportion of the money available should be devoted to investigational work on pests and diseases and their treatment.*"

4 —Plantation Inspection, Regularity and Frequency.

Resolution No. (i).

"*That this Conference is of opinion that provision should be made in next year's estimates for the appointment of District unofficial Plantation Inspectors; and that such Inspectors shall have the full powers of official Plantation Inspectors with the proviso that it shall not be competent for them to order destruction of coffee trees or plants without the written consent of the Senior Coffee Officer.*"—(Dagoretti Association)—Withdrawn.

Resolution No. (ii).

"*This meeting considers that Government should make provision for regular and systematic inspection of all coffee estates.*"—(Kyambu Association)—Carried.

CAPT SPROTT moved No. (i). He considered the question raised was likely to be a controversial one, but the object in view was that the Senior Coffee Officer, who had admitted this many times, was quite unable to carry out the routine work of inspection of plantations throughout the country. The reduction in travelling allowance also made this impossible. The main object of the motion was contained in the second part of it. It was felt that some estates were a menace to their neighbours, and those responsible do not control the pests and diseases thereon. Couch grass is also

allowed to spread on to neighbouring estates. The Department cannot always investigate such estates, and more especially for that particular work would unofficial Plantation Inspectors be of valuable assistance. These Inspectors could send in monthly returns giving details of the work performed, and it should be competent for them to inspect estates and give necessary orders to safeguard neighbouring properties. However, if such orders were ignored, the matter would be reported to the Senior Coffee Officer for advice in having the coffee trees destroyed, or other suitable action. He thought the idea would cause a certain amount of disagreement, but delegates were asked to give it fair consideration as being a comparatively cheap method of safeguarding property and as a means of helping out the Department.

Replying to questions, Capt. Sprott thought that the unofficial Inspectors should be paid.

CAPT. MONTAGU proposed that Resolution No. (ii) should be taken first. He thought that whereas many delegates might be willing to vote for No. (ii), yet No. (i) might be controversial.

THE CHAIRMAN informed Conference that with the present staff it would take two years to inspect the coffee estates in the Colony. A systematic inspection of districts would necessitate the provision of more money, although he emphasised it was only by constant inspection that coffee diseases could be kept in check. Estates were now being sub-divided and that made inspection work more difficult. He referred to the Department to-day being somewhat in a quandary, as experience showed that weedy plantations did not necessarily harbour pests.

MR. WILKINSON (Inspector of Plantations) was requested by the Chairman to make a statement on this subject.

He said that it had been his experience in inspecting coffee estates in the Colony, that the dirty estates were clean from the point of view of what is commonly termed insect and fungoid pests and diseases. His explanation was that the dirtier estates have reverted to nearly natural conditions, and the bigger insect fauna and fungoid flora throughout the estates gave rise to a natural balance nearly equalling the natural state of the country. In his own opinion he could not feel that the estates in that condition were an actual menace to neighbouring estates which were well cared for.

HON. CONWAY HARVEY thought it was very largely a question of degree in such matters. He did think it was very important that people when starting to plant coffee should get the impression that it was totally necessary to keep land

in a proper state of tilth, and the shamba should never be allowed to get out of hand. Planters should be compelled to take steps to prevent weeds, weed seeds, or pests and disease infecting neighbouring properties.

MR. MAXWELL TRENCH stated that he entirely agreed with Mr. Wilkinson, and his experience was similar.

HON. C. G. DURHAM asked what effect had the neglected state on the coffee ?

MR. WILKINSON explained that it was seldom any coffee was seen on trees in a really neglected shamba. Some coffee might be found on the tops of the trees on a few branches which had managed to obtain daylight. He wished it known that he had not referred to the subject with the idea that estates should not be kept clean—the cleaner the better.

CAPT. TYSON said that the resolution was disjointed as it stood, and as an amendment, proposed :—

"*That when the coffee services are reorganised to deal with the innovations advocated under the first resolution, consideration be given to the possibility of making provision for regular and systematic inspection of all coffee estates.*"

MR. HARPER seconded.

CAPT. SPROTT was of the opinion they were beating around the bush. He thought the point at issue was not whether they should keep estates clean, or allow them to become dirty, but really what security one planter had against another. He instanced the outbreak of *Parasa vivida*, which in the moth stage can spread very rapidly. If an estate owner decided to take no steps to control a pest the result on the next estate could be very disastrous. No planter should be allowed to harbour a pest or disease—he did not refer particularly to weeds—but in safeguarding the industry would it not be competent for a neighbour to be allowed to report the danger of an existing pest, and should not the Department send an officer to inspect and order such treatment as appeared suitable.

MR. HARPER asked if that had to do with the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN said the resolution referred to " regular and systematic inspection of all coffee estates," and he presumed that was what the Kyambu Association wanted. Apart from that, instances occurred of outbreaks of diseases and pests. The Department was endeavouring to deal with outbreaks as they occurred, and to-day was not particularly dealing with the incidence and spread of pests and diseases as revealed through systematic inspection. He considered that the Kyambu Association were aiming at systematic coffee plantation reporting, to have an officer charged with the

regular inspection of an area, and to ensure that the Diseases of Plants Regulations were applied. The Select Committee had proposed to Government the necessity for the employment of additional Plantation Inspectors for this purpose.

CAPT. TYSON explained that in his amendment he referred to the main resolution (Resolution (iii) under Section 1), and it was an attempt to weave the whole question together into one resolution.

CAPT. MONTAGU drew attention to the Resolution of the Kyambu Association, as being more definite in deciding what policy should be pursued.

COL. HON. C. G. DURHAM preferred Resolution No. (ii) and asked what benefit the country really obtained by inspection.

MR. WILKINSON agreed with Hon. Conway Harvey that the question resolved itself into one of degree. If estates could be regularly inspected once a year he was convinced that it would be of great benefit to the country. Apart from the actual inspection, the presence of a scientific officer on an estate was the most satisfactory way of meeting problems, the various stages of the pest are demonstrated, you advise thereon, and in this way the plantation derived a great deal of permanent benefit.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost,

Resolution No. (i).

CAPT. KIRTON expressed dissatisfaction with the proposal for granting to unofficial Inspectors the full powers of official Inspectors. He considered that the planting of dangerous windbreaks was another source of menace, as the incidence of mealie bug was worse when the plantation was heavily sheltered. It should be competent on the official Plantation Inspectors to order destruction of dangerous windbreaks.

THE CHAIRMAN agreed that if such trees were a menace then the Inspectors should have power to order their destruction under the Ordinance. He suggested that the resolution should read " coffee trees or *other* plants, etc."

CAPT. SPROTT, said that in some districts it might be possible to find scientific men competent to inspect estates. Such appointments would be made under the Ordinance and governed by the Department of Agriculture. He suggested they should be paid travelling allowance as a comparatively cheap way of fulfilling the work of the Department.

MAJOR GAITSKELL favoured the application of the Ordinance in this way. He thought it could be usefully applied

a small number districts and the Chief Inspector could be asked for when necessary. The District Associations would have the knowledge and know the persons responsible to all the settlers in their districts, and the Department would be asked to make the appointments.

MR. BAKER said that if regular inspectors about every year could be arranged, then the appointment of unofficial inspectors would be unnecessary.

CAPT. SIDNEY said that if they had thought it probable that Government would make sufficient new appointments in the near future to inspect regularly, the resolution would not have been on the agenda.

THE CHAIRMAN informed Conference that Government did not oppose the appointment of honorary unofficial inspectors. The Ordinance had been interpreted by the Legal Department, and it was considered that it was possible under the Ordinance to appoint such inspectors. The principle of using them had really to be decided.

MR. ARCHER considered it was a question for the districts to decide, as in some districts it could not be applied. He wished the Conference to refer the question to District Associations for their consideration and opinion.

MR. HARVEY supported the suggestion. He considered it would be dangerous for Conference to make a decision, and it would hinder their fellow-workers if they made impracticable suggestions.

Further discussion ensued.

MR. ARCHER formally proposed the following amendment —

"That the Conference refer to District Associations the question as to whether or additions to existing or Government officials, it be desirable to appoint District unofficial Plantation Inspectors, whose duty it shall be honorary, said Inspectors to have the full powers of official Plantation Inspectors, with the proviso that it shall not be compulsory for them to order destruction of coffee trees or other plants without the written consent of a competent Coffee Officer." —carried.

CAPT. SIDNEY expressed himself in favour, seconded the amendment, and withdrew Resolution No. 11.

COLONEL TUCKER explained to delegates that Districts Associations might be interested to know that as one of the new represented meetings in Nakuru in connection with the Native Industry, convened to discuss the native milk bowl question, it had been unanimously decided that they would

submit to any legislation whereby honorary inspectors were appointed in so far as they were concerned. It was recognised that a negligent farmer might be a serious menace.

COMMANDER COKE asked if the service of inspection by unofficial Plantation Inspectors was intended to implement the proposals embodied in Resolution No. (ii). (Conference agreed that it was so.).

THE CHAIRMAN intimated that if the proposals of the Select Committee were adopted in their entirety there eventually would be four officers—Coffee Officers and Plantation Inspectors—available for coffee services, and that there should be three employed next year. The two officers (Senior Coffee Officer and Inspector of Plantations could not possibly cover the country in 12 months, at least two years would be required. If the District Associations were in favour of utilising the services of unofficial Inspectors, the question would be threshed out by the Consulting Committee to be appointed.

At the present juncture it was decided that further discussion was not necessary.

MR. ARCHER'S amendment was carried *nem con.*

5.—Organisation of Extension Services, *i.e.*, Attendance of Departmental Officers for Advisory Services in Districts.

Resolution No. (i).

THE CHAIRMAN asked for this resolution to be discussed in the afternoon, when the Agricultural Chemist would attend.

Conference agreed—See page 25.

Resolution No. (ii).

"*That the personnel of the Coffee Department should consist of the following:—Two Coffee Officers, three Entomologists (two of whom would be with the travelling Laboratories), one Mycologist, and in addition, unofficial Plantation Inspectors.*"—(Kyambu Association)—Withdrawn.

CAPT. MONTAGU said that they had already discussed the proposals regarding staff, and he thought they would be prepared to *withdraw the motion.*

6.—Financial Provision.

Resolution.

"*That in view of the great importance of the Coffee Industry to the whole community, Government should provide sufficient and essential services for the protection of the industry, out of general revenue.*"—(Kyambu Association.)—Carried.

THE CHAIRMAN said that Conference had already been informed of Government's point of view. From Coffee Licenses last year £1,138 had been collected, and that money had been placed with General Revenue. They should realise that Government had approved of the appointment of two more Entomologists, and it was expected that the coffee industry would provide something towards any further addition to staff for coffee services. The resolution propounded was a complete negative.

CAPT. MONTAGU in proposing the motion, said that in view of what His Excellency had informed them, it might seem that the resolution was unnecessary. On the other hand the feeling in districts was so strong, and especially in the Kyambu district, that the matter should be threshed out. He referred to the discussion at the meeting when a very strong point was raised. When money was allocated for any specific purpose, there was no safeguard that in time the money might be withdrawn for another purpose. The Association felt that if they were unable to get the service they required, and it should be necessary to impose a cess, then the coffee industry should have control over the spending of the money.

CAPT. FINDLAY seconded. He intimated that the feeling among planters was that if a cess should be imposed then merchants should pay their share.

MR. ARCHER supported the motion. He said that the Coffee Planters' Union for a long time had been discussing the question of a cess, on a £1 for £1 basis, to provide for scientific services for the industry. They had come to the conclusion generally that the industry was not yet sufficiently established to enable them to make that provision which Government was anxious to see. All were aware that in older Colonies, where industries were established, they had assisted Government to provide services of that kind, and in course of time they had established their own laboratories entirely independent of Government. Those of them who had flirted with the question of a cess were convinced that the coffee industry of the Colony had not reached the stage even of participation in expense. Government should realise that the bulk of planters still drew on capital to keep their coffee estates working. If, however, the cess should be imposed it must be applied to all concerned. The commercial people generally were dependent on the agricultural industry, and to a very large extent on the coffee industry, but for the present it was due to Government to provide the necessary services. They were also faced with the difficulty, if the cess were imposed, of setting up a political precedent. However, he personally thought the time might come when

it would be advantageous to impose levies upon the various main industries, and for them all to appoint executive boards in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture.

HON. CONWAY HARVEY expressed himself in agreement with Mr. Archer. He maintained that it was the duty of Government to preserve the " health " of the coffee industry the same as it conserved the public health of the population, but he did not consider Government should be called upon to spend public money in cleaning up individual plantations. If scientific and technical officers were required to conduct experiments, he thought planters should pay on a sound basis to be arranged. Government should, however, recognise the fact that the industry was of enormous stimulus to the various forms of industry throughout the country.

CAPT. MONTAGU referred to the effect the levy would have in retarding development, seeing that planters at the present time were all engaged in developing the industry.

COL. HON. C. G. DURHAM was opposed to the principle of a cess on a £1 for £1 basis. He thought it was Government's duty to find revenue and provide necessary scientific staff, working under the Agricultural Department. He referred to the great saving and economy in production that would be effected in providing the staff, so necessary now that Kenya was taking such an important place as a coffee producing country.

MR. TRENCH thought it was not realised what troubles coffee planters had to contend with, which were lying ahead if they were not tackled immediately.

HON. A. C. TANNAHILL said he was not in favour of the resolution. Planters should bear in mind the financial state of the country, and he doubted whether they could bear any further expense in support of one industry. He agreed with Mr. Archer in principle, but in his opinion the industry had about reached the stage when it could support itself.

MR. JOHNSON considered it would be fatal if the Research Officers were not obtained, and the industry were found unprepared for further outbreaks.

MR. TRENCH said a sum of £3,000, additional to what had been allocated, would suffice to see the industry through their difficulties.

THE CHAIRMAN explained that £1,750 had been additionally approved for this year, but it was not all recurrent expenditure. A scientific officer taking into account his salary, travelling expenses, house, passage, etc., whether he was in the country or on leave, costs on an average £850 per annum.

Laboratory and other expenses should be added which bring up the total to approximately £1,000 per officer. To-day there were actually five officers concerned with coffee—three of whom were engaged almost entirely in connection with the industry, and two officers worked part time on coffee diseases, thus the Department was spending about £4,000 per annum directly on the coffee industry, and with the new proposals he considered they were accorded a fairly generous expenditure. The proposals of the Select Committee, if adopted in their entirety, would increase the expenditure by about £4,000 per annum, making, say, £8,000 in all.

MR. HARPER wished to answer Mr. Tannahill's inference that the country could afford no more expenditure on the coffee industry. In considering Government's capacity to expend money, it must decide between productive and unproductive expenditure. The losses this year resulting from one pest had been estimated at £250,000. If those losses could have been averted, a considerable increased amount would have been saved for revenue; and in effect they were asking for productive expenditure.

After further discussion the Resolution was carried by 18 votes to 2 against.

MR. ARCHER, asked permission to raise a question under No. 6 "Financial Provision." He said that in the past there had been difficulty in finding sufficient funds to meet the cost of travelling allowances, and the officers had ceased to function in some districts. He proposed the following resolution :—

"*That in the budget for Coffee Services, the Director of Agriculture should ensure, so far as is possible, that adequate provision be made for the transport of those officers whose duties involve travelling.*"—Carried.

MR. HARPER seconded.

The resolution was carried *nem con.*

(Afternoon Session).

2.—Maintenance of Soil Fertility.

Resolution No. (i).

"*That having regard to the fact that the yield of coffee in the Colony is considerably augmented by the liberal application of bulk manures such as cattle and sheep, and the expressed desire of Government that the soil of the Colony should produce its maximum, and having regard to the very large deposits of such manures in the cattle and sheep areas of the Colony many of which are in close proximity to the railway, and having regard to the existing high railway freights for such manures;*

this Conference requests Government to seriously consider the advisability of substantially reducing the existing rates believing that even if such manures were carried at a loss to the railway the Government would be more than compensated by the increased yields and consequent prosperity."—(Ruiru Farmers' Association)—See amendment page 22.

CAPT. KIRTON said that the resolution was intended to make available the very large deposits of manure in the Colony. It was agreed that yields of coffee were augmented by the liberal application of kraal manures—cattle, sheep and goat. Hitherto it had been very difficult to get at these deposits, but in recent years transport facilities had improved, but the high cost involved had made it impossible to use them. Even if Government carried such manures without charge he thought they would benefit by the increased yields, and improved prosperity. It should be recognised that they were dependent on supplies from oversea for guano and other fertilizers, and as farmers would have to make full use of manures from the stock districts, they must be made available.

COMMANDER WARD seconded.

MR. JOHNSON stated that he had been using manure rather considerably, and there had been a great increase in the yield of coffee, and the trees affected with black tip looked better.

MR. GRAHAME BELL corroborated this statement, and said his yield had been doubled.

MR. BROWNING explained the railway rates for manure in 10 ton lots as a minimum, Shs 25 per ton ; in small lots Class I rate, less 50%. Although no promise could be made, he felt, that, if by reducing the rate, more traffic would result, any recommendations of the Conference would be sympathetically considered by the Railway Advisory Council. Such recommendations would also have his support.

CAPT. SPROTT referred to the benefit accruing to natives if those deposits of kraal manure could be made available.

THE CHAIRMAN in reply to a question, thought that any possibility of manure carrying disease was not a very important risk, and there should be no real objection to the traffic in manure, provided trucks were kept clean ; but boma manure was usually laden with weed seeds.

HON. CONWAY HARVEY considered a very great deal of freight would acrue to the railway if freights were so reduced to enable planters to lime their land.

COLONEL TUCKER expressed the need for planters to bring to the notice of the Railway Advisory Council concrete

cases where it was desirable to revise railway rates. In the case of lime it had been reduced, about a year ago by 50%, after representations had been made. The railway administration had soon to find very considerable sums of money, but subject to funds permitting, he felt sure the question would receive sympathetic consideration. The rates were divided into two broad classes—exports were given a low rate, and internal traffic bears larger charges. Anything which would increase the exports of the Colony would be considered on a kind of export basis.

Conference agreed to the words "and local lime" after "sheep" in the third line, and the resolution was then carried unanimously.

Additional resolution, in regard to Export rates on coffee breaking the journey to the coast.

COMMANDER COKE proposed an additional resolution, to the effect—that coffee sent by rail from up-country stations to Nairobi to be cleaned, and sent by rail to Kilindini for shipment, should pay freight at the export rate for the first part of the journey, and that the planter should not be penalised as he is at present, because he supports a local industry, and has his coffee cured in the country. He thought that the export rate for the through journey should be applied in such cases, with possibly a small charge for the extra handling.

MAJOR BELFIELD seconded.

MR. BROWNING considered that the coffee after passing through the mill would be reduced in weight by 25%, and from Nairobi to the coast the freight would have been reduced to about 75% of its original bulk. The rates had all been based on the assumption that crops would pass from the point of origin to the coast, and in the case of coffee it was considered the traffic could bear the higher rate.

HON. CONWAY HARVEY said he considered the farmer should concern himself solely in producing, and leave subsidiary processes to an expert by whom they would be done better and more economically in a well–equipped and central establishment. The railway would not necessarily lose because of this arrangement, and they do obtain additional freight on the parchment coffee sent to Nairobi. He thought the railway should give the matter careful consideration.

MR. BROWNING explained that similar applications had been made in respect of maize, maize meal and rice, so that coffee was not the only crop concerned. In his opinion the question would have to be approached in principle and not in regard to a particular crop.

COMMANDER COKE said that the railway would not lose if the coffee was classed "in transit," otherwise planters would either do the cleaning themselves or send it home to be done.

MR. BROWNING said he hoped not to create an impression of being opposed to the resolution, but he did not wish to commit the railway. The principle of the export rates was involved.

COLONEL TUCKER agreed with Mr. Browning. The question should be based on the principle of improving the exports of the country.

HON. A. C. TANNAHILL asked what the second part of the journey was to be charged.

THE CHAIRMAN said Conference was really asking for the export rate from the point of origin to the coast, plus a surcharge.

MR. ARCHER then moved the following amendment:—

"*That coffee intended for export and ultimately exported from the country shall pay freight at the export rate plus a surcharge for handling when the journey is interrupted for cleaning only, and this Conference trusts that the Railway Council if such readjustment offends one of the basic principles of railway policy, reconsider the question of policy.*"—Carried.

COMMANDER COKE seconded, and asked to withdraw his own resolution.

The amendment was *carried unanimously.*

7.—Coffee Sales and Coffee Thefts.

Resolution No. (i).

"*Methods of checking theft of coffee should be considered; price of dealers' licenses should be increased, and very strict supervision exercised in controlling same.*"—(Mount Kenya Association)—Withdrawn.

Resolution No. (ii).

"*That in cases of suspected coffee thefts, the onus of proof of legitimate possession of the coffee should lie with the person found in possession of the coffee, and that Government should rigidly enforce the provisions of the Coffee Ordinance.*" (Kyambu Association)—Carried—See page 24.

THE CHAIRMAN informed Conference that in response to his invitation representatives from the Police Department (Capt. M. St. C Thom), and the Administration (Mr. H. E. Welby) had kindly attended. He proposed discussing the question as a whole.

MR. MAXWELL TRENCH introduced Resolution No. (i), and said that "The Registration of Coffee Plantations and Coffee Dealers' Ordinance" was passed in 1918, and prohibited coffee being sold or bought without some record being kept by Government Officers concerned.

CAPT. THOM drew attention to Section 7 of the Ordinance. He said that under the provisions of the Ordinance a register should be kept, and he believed that they were kept, but without getting details from the districts concerned, he could not say with certainty if the registers were inspected regularly. He would be pleased to make the necessary enquiries.

MR. WELBY was of the opinion that a register of dealers was kept in all districts.

MR. ARCHER said a good many coffee planters had no record of their coffee sales, and the police did not inspect the books on the farms as required by the Ordinance.

MAJOR GAITSKELL drew attention to the number of unlicensed dealers going around the country.

MR. ARCHER considered that was one of the weaknesses, and he believed that in areas not covered by Municipal Councils, excepting in out-districts, the District Commissioner should only issue a license on the advice of the District Committee, who knew the probity of applicants.

MR. HARPER said there was nothing to prevent dealers obtaining a license in one district and trading in another

CAPT. THOM suggested that the license should only be issued when the applicant was domiciled in the magisterial area.

MR. VERNON WILSON drew attention to the pilferages at Kilindini. A few years ago the C.I.D. investigated the matter and traced the thefts to the use of sampling irons. The matter required investigating again.

MAJOR MILLIGAN considered the Administration could help in the matter as well as the police.

MR. ARCHER thought the Ordinance needed re-drafting altogether. The matter was too much for the Conference to undertake, and proposed the following resolution :—

"*That this Conference is of opinion the Ordinance does not offer adequate protection and required amendment, and should appoint a Committee to go into the question with the Attorney General.*"—Carried—See below.

MR. TRENCH seconded, and Resolution No. (i) was withdrawn. He thought the Ordinance might be somewhat

difficult to administer owing to some planters selling "buni" to Somalis.

THE CHAIRMAN emphasised the importance of growers selling only to the holders of licenses.

MR. HARPER proposed that the new resolution should take the form of a recommendation to the Consulting Committee for their attention before being forwarded.

Conference agreed.

Resolution No. (ii) was carried *nem con.*

5.—Organisation of Extension Services, *i.e.*, Attendance of Departmental Officers for Advisory Services in Districts

Resolution No. (i).

"*As there seems to have been some difficulty in the past in getting soil analyses carried out, this district requests information as to whether Government is in a position to get such analyses carried out, and, if not, whether it will make the necessary arrangements. If necessary, districts might co-operate by sending in all samples at the same time.*" (Kyambu Association).

CAPT. MONTAGU explained that the above was put forward in the form of a question.

MR. BECKLEY (Agricultural Chemist) said that on the whole, as far as working out a manurial programme was concerned, soil analysis was of very little value. He considered the only soil analysis that should be carried out were soils taken for soil surveys, or for definite scientific purposes.

THE CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Beckley substantiated the opinion of other officers who had been engaged on soil analysis. It appeared that real value was obtained—not from complete soil analyses—but from determinations of humus, acidity, lime and phosphates. Those things generally affected the plant, but a chemist would not call that a soil analysis—it was really partial soil determination. The Department was able to carry out such partial analyses.

CAPT. FINDLAY thought acidity was important.

THE CHAIRMAN said the Department could undertake that if required. He decided to arrange for an article to be published, dealing with the points of analyses useful to coffee planters, and that would probably meet the wishes of Conference.—Agreed.

8.—Estate Management, etc.

Resolution No. (i).

"*Piecework should be calculated on a task which takes eight hours (or more) to complete.*"—(Mount Kenya Association)—Withdrawn.

Conference decided that the question was not appropriate for their discussion.

The resolution was withdrawn.

Resolution No. (ii).

"*That having regard to the danger necessarily attendant on the introduction into the Colony of a new species of plant so susceptible to pests and diseases as coffee, which dangers, it is impossible on present or available information to estimate, and having regard to the fact that if inferior varieties of coffee prove themselves suited to the climatic and other conditions in the Colony, their cultivation by natives in the reserves will almost inevitably follow ; and having regard to the practical impossibility of supervising scattered areas of native cultivation in the case of a crop which needs such close unremitting attention as coffee. This Conference strongly urges that the risks entailed by the introduction of Liberica and Robusta types to the widely established Arabica industry which is recognised on the market as coffee of the highest quality and class, considerably outweigh the problematical advantages which might accrue from the experiment.*"(Ruiru Farmers' Association)—Carried.

Resolution No. (iii).

"*This district considers that the growing of low grades of coffee would be extremely detrimental to the best interests of the industry.*"—(Kyambu Association)—Withdrawn.

After discussion Resolution No. (iii) was withdrawn.

MR. HARPER moved Resolution No. (ii), and referred to the statement in the Report of the Department of Agriculture for the year 1925 that experiments were being conducted at the coast with a view to testing the possibility of growing Liberica and Robusta varieties of coffee. Definite resolutions had been put forward at different times deprecating the introduction of these coffees, and it was thought that serious consideration should be given to the question before the experiments were conducted on a serious scale. He emphasised the difficulties of supervising the planting over scattered areas of these varieties by natives, and the safety of the delicate varieties grown by the European planters would

be seriously threatened. The possibility of controlling diseases in native country would be quite impossible. The climatic conditions of the country were peculiar, and the incidence of the mealie bug had proved that Kenya could not resort to methods of control as known and used in other countries. There was no justification for natives to magnify those dangers by introducing a crop such as coffee in the reserves, when they had innumerable other crops valuable and profitable to themselves.

CAPT. KIRTON seconded.

THE CHAIRMAN said that the Department had introduced plants, after inspection, of the Liberica, Robusta, Bukobensis and Quilloa varieties for experimental purposes. Plots had been laid down on a number of European farms at the coast. If the trials were unsuccessful the plants would be destroyed. The Department would be wanting in its duty if it did not investigate the behaviour of coffee varieties at the coast. He explained that the Department did not wish to embarass coffee planters, nor to endanger established coffee plantations, but desired if possible to establish the productive value of other and unexploited coffee areas.

MR. ARCHER asked whether the object of the experiments was to introduce to European planters at the coast the varieties of coffee under experiment if they proved a success.

THE CHAIRMAN replied, yes, European planters already had charge of the experiments with the four varieties of coffee he had mentioned. He said that commercial interests generally were concerned in the volume of production and not in the source of production ; but he believed that in certain spheres outside the Colony an interest was taken in the growing of Liberica and Robusta types of coffee by natives. He saw no reason to prohibit the growing of suitable varieties of coffee in areas where trials were now being conducted, because of the possibility of cultivation spreading in reserves.

MAJOR BELFIELD asked if Government were in favour of natives growing coffee, but he thought it could not be so.

THE CHAIRMAN said the question of natives growing coffee, *i.e.*, Arabica, in the highlands had been discussed by Government and there was to-day no likelihood of such being permitted. The question of natives in other areas growing coffee other than Arabica had not been raised and therefore no decision had been promulgated. The danger of natives growing low grade types of coffee in the highlands is fully appreciated. There may be cultural difficulties which may preclude planting. The Department had no proposal for introducing coffee growing into native areas ; were such done,

very close supervision would have to be exercised He thought that planters would have to rely on the watchfulness of the Department, it did not wish the industry to have to face more menaces than it had already.

HON. COL. DURHAM thanked the Chairman for his assurance. He thought coffee growing by natives was beyond their capacity, and that they should be prevented doing so.

COMMANDER COKE thought that if natives were permitted to grow such types as Robusta and Liberica at the coast now, its movement to the highlands could not be prevented in five or ten years' time. He strongly supported the resolution of the Ruiru Farmers' Association because it clearly explained the whole question. He felt that the industry would make no progress if they remained inert when vital questions were being considered such as the one under discussion, they must take a broad view to safeguard the industry.

Resolution No. (ii) was carried with one dissentient.

Resolution No. (iv).

"*That Government should encourage the construction of dams with a view to the conservation and storage of the water supply of the Colony.*"—(Kyambu Association)—Carried.

CAPT. MONTAGU in moving the resolution, said it had been put forward because their Road Board had given a good deal of opposition to the construction of dams, and with a view to educating farmers that the construction of dams was of great benefit to the country.

The resolution was carried *nem. con.*

9.—Appointment of Consulting Committee for future Conference.

THE CHAIRMAN intimated that the Department was entirely in the hands of Conference in this matter. The Conference must decide whether a Consulting Committee should be appointed with whom the Director of Agriculture could confer, if they wished to have an Annual Coffee Conference, or whether questions that arise should be referred to the Coffee Planters' Union as in the past. He expressed to the Coffee Planters' Union the appreciation and thanks of the Department for their valuable assistance in the past, and for the successful inauguration of the first Conference. The Government, he said, would welcome a stronger Union than existed to-day, and he asked planters to combine so that Government might have an authoritative opinion from the industry as a whole

Conference decided that a Consulting Committee, of nine members, representative of the industry, should be formed to confer with the Director of Agriculture ; and the members of the Committee were appointed as follows :—

C. K. Archer, Esq. ; H. Grahame Bell, Esq. ; Commander A. Coke, ; Hon. Conway Harvey, ; S. O. Hemsted, Esq. ; H. H. Peet, Esq. ; M. D. le Poer Trench, Esq. ; Capt. W. Tyson, ; Commander R. M. Pakenham-Walsh.

The question of convening an Annual Coffee Conference was left in abeyance.

CAPT. MONTAGU moved the following resolution :—

" *That this Conference is of opinion that it is most desirable that there should be a fully representative body of the coffee planting industry with whom Government can collaborate and further that this Conference is of opinion that the Coffee Planters' Union provides such a body and urges all coffee planters and others interested in the industry to join.*"—Carried

MR. JOHNSON seconded.

The Resolution was carried *nem. con.*

Vote of Thanks.

THE CHAIRMAN expressed on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, to the Coffee Planters' Union, to the delegates, and the other gentlemen who had attended by invitation, thanks for the assistance they had rendered at the Conference. The Conference had been a fully representative one, and he hoped that its deliberations would result in achieving what the industry needed.

MR. ARCHER proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Harrison for the very able way he had conducted the Conference.

Carried with acclamation.

The Conference then concluded.